UNITED NATIONS **A**

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/53/144
6 July 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-third session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ITEM IN THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FIFTY-THIRD SESSION

OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Letter dated 30 June 1998 from the representatives of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with rule 13 (e) of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly of an additional item entitled "Observer status for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in the General Assembly".

An explanatory memorandum (see annex) in support of the above request and a draft resolution (see appendix) are attached to the present letter, in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

We further have the honour to request that the present letter be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Mr. John H. CRIGHTON
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Australia to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Ernst SUCHARIPA
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Austria to the United Nations

98-19431 (E) 070798

/...

(Signed) M. Alex REYN
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Belgium to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Ivo ŠRÁMEK
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Czech Republic to the
United Nations

(Signed) Mrs. Marjatta RASI
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Finland to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Gerhard Walter HENZE
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Germany to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. André ERDÖS
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Hungary to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. John H. F. CAMPBELL
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Ireland to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Hisashi OWADA
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Japan to the United Nations

(Signed) Sr. Manuel TELLO
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Mexico to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Robert R. FOWLER
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Canada to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Jorgen BØJER
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Denmark to the United Nations

(Signed) M. Alain DEJAMMET
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of France to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Vassilis KASKARELIS
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Greece to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Gunnar PÁLSSON
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Iceland to the United Nations

(Signed) M. Francesco Paolo FULCI
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Italy to the United Nations

(Signed) M. Jean-Louis WOLZFELD
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Luxembourg to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Jan BERTELING
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Michael John POWLES
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of New Zealand to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Eugeniusz WYZNER
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Poland
to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. LEE See-young
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of the Republic of Korea
to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Hans DAHLGREN
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Sweden to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Stephen GOMERSALL
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Deputy Permanent Representative
of the United Kingdom of Great
Britain and Northern Ireland
to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Ole Peter KOLBY
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Norway to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. José Tadeu SOARES
Chargé d'affaires a.i.
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative
of Portugal to the United Nations

(Signed) Sr. Inocencio F. ARIAS
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Spain to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Volkan VURAL
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of Turkey to the United Nations

(Signed) Mr. Bill RICHARDSON
Ambassador Extraordinary
and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of the United States of America
to the United Nations

ANNEX

Explanatory memorandum

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is an international intergovernmental organization, based in Paris, which currently has 29 member countries. It was established by the Convention on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in 1960, as a successor to the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, created in 1948. It has, as its aim, the promotion of policies designed to:

- Achieve the highest sustainable economic growth and employment and a rising standard of living in member countries, while maintaining financial stability, and thus to contribute to the development of the world economy;

- Contribute to sound economic expansion in member as well as non-member countries in the process of economic development;

- Contribute to the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis, in accordance with international obligations.

Within this broad mandate, the Organization functions essentially as a forum where countries come together to discuss critical issues, opportunities and policy options, to exchange information and to agree on coordinated or harmonized policy approaches. OECD's activities cover a broad range of areas, including economics; energy; environment; development cooperation; education, employment, labour and social affairs; food, agriculture and fisheries; financial, fiscal and enterprise affairs; public management; science, technology and industry; statistics; territorial development; trade and transport.

OECD carries out its work through some 200 specialized committees and other bodies, including the semi-autonomous Nuclear Energy Agency and Development Centre. Work is also carried out through the International Energy Agency, an autonomous body within the framework of the Organization. This work is supported by an international secretariat composed of about 1,900 staff members.

The governing body of OECD is the Council, which has authority to adopt decisions, which are legally binding on members, and recommendations, which are an expression of the political will of members to implement certain policies. Moreover, OECD has provided the framework for the negotiation of several multilateral agreements and arrangements, such as the recently concluded "Convention on combating bribery of foreign officials in international business transactions", signed also by several non-member countries.

Membership in OECD remained stable for many years, until 1994, when Mexico joined the Organization, followed by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and the Republic of Korea. Increasingly in recent years, non-member countries have joined with member countries in a wide variety of cooperative activities within OECD. In particular, through its "Centre for Cooperation with Non Members", the

Organization carries out a broad range of thematic, multi-country activities and programmes, such as the "Transition Economy Programme", which focuses on countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the newly independent States, and the "Emerging Market Economy Forum", in which non-member participation depends upon the topic of the particular activity. It also has specific programmes of cooperation and dialogue with certain non-member countries, such as the Russian Federation and China. Moreover, a number of non-members take part in OECD committees and working parties either as observers or as full participants. The Development Centre, whose principal activities include various form of cooperation and dialogue, serves as a bridge between OECD member countries and developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In its programme of work for the coming years, OECD will focus on several major issues, such as sustainable development, development assistance, ageing populations and electronic commerce, on which an increased exchange with the United Nations General Assembly would be mutually beneficial.

Numerous United Nations agencies and bodies (such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations/Economic Commission for Europe, International Atomic Energy Agency) participate in OECD activities, either as observers or on the basis of invitations to attend particular meetings.

OECD enjoys observer status in the United Nations Economic and Social Council as well as in UNCTAD, and has working arrangements with certain other economic bodies and organizations in the United Nations family, including the Conferences of the Parties and the Working Groups of several key United Nations Conventions and their preparatory bodies. However, the ad hoc arrangements for observing selected General Assembly sessions, particularly on environment and development, have become increasingly unworkable. The Organization considers it desirable to consolidate links between OECD and the United Nations, and that observer status in the General Assembly would be mutually beneficial.

Consequently, pursuant to a decision taken by its Council, OECD requests that it be granted observer status in the General Assembly. The observer status sought for OECD would cover all bodies within its framework.

APPENDIX

Draft United Nations General Assembly resolution

Observer status for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development,

1. Decides to invite the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.